GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1073
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Call Drop
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of increase in menace of call drops and call failures, the Union Government has decided to set up a platform for consumers to provide direct feedback on call drops and call failures and proposes to review the telecom policy;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether call drop norms have been violated by various companies in recent times;

(d) if so, the details of the action taken by the Government in this regard along with the present status of providing compensation to subscribers on call drop;

(e) whether the interconnectivity disputes between some incumbent operators have intensified in the recent times resulting in consumers becoming victims of such a situation; and

(f) if so, the steps the Union Government proposes to take to ensure that the mobile consumers are not affected due to interconnectivity disputes between some operators?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) & (b) The dropping of calls in wireless network is a world-wide phenomenon and happens in every wireless network due to various reasons including poor radio coverage, radio interference, loading of available spectrum, change in pattern of traffic, shutdown of sites due to power failures etc.; however, both the Government and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) are taking all possible steps and pursuing with the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) to address the problem of call drop and bring it down within the permissible limit.

For obtaining direct feedback from subscribers, an IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System) has been launched by Department of Telecommunications on 23.12.2016 in Delhi, Mumbai, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and Goa. It has been extended to all the States on 12.01.2017 except Punjab and Manipur which shall also be covered after elections in these States.The system automatically calls the subscribers, with Calling Line Identification (CLI) number 1955 on random basis to get feedback about problem of call drop and its location. During first three weeks (23 December 2016 to 14 January 2017) about 2 lakh IVRS calls have been answered by unique subscribers, out of which, about 16% (33,598) participated in the survey. The feedback so received is forwarded to TSPs for necessary corrective action.

(c) TRAI monitors the performance of service providers through quarterly performance monitoring reports and publishes the same on its website www.trai.gov.in. From analysis of the quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMR) of September 2015, December 2015, March 2016, June 2016 and September 2016 available on TRAI website, it has been noticed that there has been consistent improvement in the performance of service providers in meeting the benchmark for call drop parameter.

<pre>
Quarter ending Total number of TSPs Number of TSPs not meeting benchmarks of Call Drop Rate (benchmark <=2%)
2G 3G 2G 3G
September 2015 183 94 4 2
December 2015 183 97 1 1
March 2016 178 106 1 1
June 2016 175 106 Nil Nil
September 2016 163 107 Nil Nil

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All the service providers had met the benchmark for the parameter "call drop rate (benchmark = 2%)" in June 2016 & September 2016.

(d) For addressing call drop issue, TRAI also regularly undertakes the drive tests of mobile networks in select cities; highways and

railway routes to assess the Quality of Service and coverage around the areas covered in the drive test routes.The results of drive tests are shared with the service providers for improving Quality of Service and coverage in the areas identified in the Drive Tests.
TRAI imposes financial disincentives for non-compliance with the benchmarks for Quality of Service parameters including call drops.The details of financial disincentives imposed on the Cellular Service Telecom providers (2G & 3G) for non-compliance with the Quality of Service Benchmarks are given below:
<pre>
2G Services Total Rs. (in lakhs)
Aircel 302.50
BhartiAirtel 40.00
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) 227.00
Idea 25.50
Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. 1.50
Reliance Com 132.50
Reliance Telecom 32.00
Sistema 3.00
Tata 89.00
Telewings 13.50
Vodafone 84.00
Total 950.50
3G Services
Aircel 156.50
BSNL 70.00
Vodafone 2.50
Total 229.00
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In addition, the Government is also constantly monitoring the progress of telecom operators in respect of addressing the call drop issue and periodic review meetings are held in this regard. During the review, the TSPs have reported that they have already installed more than 1,60,000 additional BTSs (Base Transceiver Stations) across the country during 6Â½ month period from 15th June 2016 to 31st December 2016 and further plan to install about 1,10,000 additional BTSs across the country up to 31st March 2017.The TSPs have also informed that about 4,97,000 BTSs have been optimized for improvement in Network Performance from June 2015 onwards and in addition, frequency re-planning done for more than 4,25,000 BTSs for handling interference issues.

From the point of view of compensating consumers for dropped calls, TRAI had notified "The Telecom Consumers Protection (Ninth Amendment) Regulations, 2015 (9 of 2015) on 16th October 2015, to be effective from 1st January 2016. These regulations mandated originating CMTSPs (Cellular Mobile Telephone Service Providers) to credit one Rupee for a dropped call to the calling consumers as notional compensation, limited to three dropped calls in a day. The service providers and their associations approached the Supreme Court against the said Regulations of TRAI. The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its order dated 11.05.2016, quashed the said Regulations.

(e) & (f) On the issue of interconnectivity disputes between a new operator with some incumbent operators, the Government has directed the TSPs to resolve the issues of interconnectivity among themselves within the existing regulatory framework so as to avoid inconvenience to the consumers.
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